



Group Introductions

December 6, 2023: *The Opportunity: Astrotourism*

- What is your name?
- Where are you from?
- What are your organizational affiliations?
- Some dark sky work are you involved with?
- What motivates you to do this work?

PANELISTS

Dr. David Mitchell

Springfield, MO

Professor, Department of Economics, [Missouri State University](#)

[Dark Sky Tourism: Economic Impacts on the Colorado Plateau Economy, USA](#)

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Elizabeth Woolsey

Baker, NV

Coordinator, [Park to Park in the Dark](#); Business Owner, [Stargazer Inn & Bristlecone General Store](#)

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Rich Csenge

Kanab, UT

Founder & President, [Stellar Vista Observatory](#)

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Eric Sim

Kanab, UT

Board Member & Secretary, [Stellar Vista Observatory](#)

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Hilary Sager

Portland, OR

Destination Stewardship Manager, [Travel Oregon](#)

[Dark Sky Tourism in Oregon](#); [Stargazing in Oregon](#)

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PARTICIPANTS

Lena Allen

AZ

Arizona Office of Tourism. Arizona has quite a few International Dark Skies and a robust space background. Happy to be here and support partners and the great work going on around the state.

Liz Anderson

Salt Lake City, UT

Cottonwood Canyons Foundation

Hi all! I am the Education Director with Cottonwood Canyons Foundation in Salt Lake City Utah. Lead Moonlight Snowshoe Tours, want to expand.

Irving Antonio

Commerce City, CO

Irving a C.R.Y for Adventure, A Colorado Road Yacht for Adventure. I have free astronomy showings at local Rec center in Commerce City, Colorado. I offer VIP road trips on request. I have partnered up with my local chapter and outside cities like Georgetown and Evergreen, Aurora to show some events.

John Ashley

MT

Board Chair, Starry Skies Montana (DS chapter)

Jeff Axel

NV

Lake Mead Visitor Services Manager and Parashant Chief of Interpretation, NPS

Rebuilding the visitor service program at Lake Mead to see what we can include for dark skies including inviting astronomers to help lead programs

John Barentine

Tucson, AZ

Dark Sky Consulting, DarkSky Southern Arizona, American Astronomical Society, International Astronomical Union, and many more

Work: Assisting a variety of stakeholders, public and private, to advance the dark-sky movement around the world

Motivation: to inspire the world to take on big social problems by solving one very easy-to-solve one.

Mark Bassett

Ely, NV

Nevada Northern Railway Museum and the Great Basin Star Train

It opens new markets for the museum

Bram Bauwens:

Belgium, Europe

:-) I am an active member of the Belgian Association for Astronomy at the local and national level. I am a guide in astronomy and nature/ecology. Dark Sky advocate.

Sabrina Beard

Flagstaff, AZ

Discover Flagstaff CVB, we are the first international dark sky city and home to Lowell observatory, i love supporting eco tourism and my local community

Tom Beckett

UT

Stargazing river trips for Holiday River Expeditions in Canyonlands and Dinosaur. I want to publicize Critical Space Theory.

Mary Bedingfieldsmith

Torrey, UT

Torrey, UT is Utah's first international dark sky community. President of Torrey Dark Skies whose mission is to preserve, protect, and promote our night skies. We have a memorandum of understanding with Torrey Town to help them with dark sky programming. I'm in love with the night and want it to be here in perpetuity.

Tom Berta

Charleston, SC

Advocate Dark Sky and Starry Skies South. Located in the Lowcountry of South Carolina, Charleston. Working with to astronomy clubs. Working with local officials to install proper lighting.

Barry A Bertani

Flagstaff, AZ

Flagstaff Dark Sky Coalition
Star Parties

Jerry Bixman

Parowan City, UT

Amateur AstroPhotographer
Dark Skies

Athens Boyle

Salt Lake City, UT

I'm originally from Chicago but moved to Salt Lake City in 2019. I'm a dark sky scholar at the University of Utah. Currently, I'm working on publishing a thesis in light pollution through the Honors College. My most recent dark skies involvement was a study in Torrey, UT though my "Nightscapes" class. I'm a sustainability student so I'm motivated to study light pollution because I can see the fruits of my labor with light having no residency time. Plus, as someone with sleep issues, circadian rhythms are a subject I'm very passionate about.

Natalie Brannon

Kanab, UT

Stellar Vista Observatory, Vice President

Glenna Brown

Missoula, MT

Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana, assisting on a project concerning night sky viewing in Eastern Montana

Sherri Brueggemann

Albuquerque, NM

Art and Cultural Administrator/Space Tourism-curious, (big fan of Spaceport America concept)

Multi-tasking with real job today, hence camera off.

Yay! Yesterday's AXIOS Finish Line Newsletter: "1 big thing: Gazing at the night sky"

https://www.axios.com/newsletters/axios-finish-line-78a78a96-a976-41fc-b45f-b16eeb248f04.html?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_axiosfinishline&stream=top

Matthew Cauley

Vero Beach, FL and East Zion, UT

CM&D / East Zion Initiative

I am a development consultant working with a private land owner on the East Side of Zion National Park and in Kane County, Utah. I am affiliated with the East Zion Initiative and Zion Mountain Ranch. I am located in Vero Beach, FL.

Steve Corbato

Portland, OR

Oregonians for Wild Utah, Dark Sky Newbie (know SE Oregon, Death Valley, and southern Utah skies the best); growing awareness of the importance and risks to dark sky view sheds

Debra Csenge

Kanab, UT

Hi from Kanab Utah. Debra Csenge, affiliated with Stellar Vista Observatory in Kanab.

Rich Csenge

Kanab, UT

Stellar Vista Observatory, a 501c3 nonprofit in Kanab, Utah, has just received the "go ahead" from our local Water Conservancy District to form a partnership that will build an educational public observatory on two acres of land belonging to the conservancy. The City of Kanab has an outdoor lighting ordinance - Chapter 22 of Kanab City Code.

www.stellarvistaobservatory.org

Thomas Dansie

Springdale, UT

Tom Dansie, Rick Wixom, and Ryan Gubler - Town of Springdale, Utah. We are the Dark Sky Team for Springdale, an International Dark Sky Community. Springdale and Zion Canyon have amazing dark skies, and we are excited to work to preserve this resource.

John Dean
Parowan, UT
Parowan Utah City Councilman

Jeffrey Decristofaro
Asheville, NC
No professional affiliation but advocate for Astrotourism

Zach Dutra
Lake City, CO
Lake Fork Valley Conservancy - Lake Fork Earth & Sky Center. Developing new observation sites in the San Juan Mtns of Colorado. I'm motivated because light pollution is growing so rapidly.

Alan Eastman
Salt Lake City, UT
DarkSky Utah, Chair, I got started doing observations in national parks and monuments (Zion, Bears Ears, Sequoia, etc.) I do this because I got started, got hooked, and can't quit! BTW, Anil is on our Board, and really one of the good guys! (I have yet to hear him play his cello, but understand he plays well...)

Matthew Fisher
Kanab, UT
New Volunteer with Stellar Vista Observatory in Kanab, Utah. We have have amazing night skys and my desire is to promote them and protect them.

Brandon Flint
UT
Golden Spike NHP, Box Elder County, UT; Nights skies are an important resource at Golden Spike. They are also part of the railroad story

Paul Fuhrmann
Kanab, Utah
Dark Skies advocate for efforts underway in Kanab, UT and Stella Vista Observatory

Emma George
Logan, UT
I'm with the Bear River Heritage Area. I'm the Folk Art Coordinator, and we focus on tourism in this area.

Jodi Geroux
Salt Lake City, UT
Emigration Canyon Planning Commissioner; Co-authored a Dark Sky Ordinance for our Township, Motivated to preserve the night sky and reduce light pollution.

Kara Grau
Missoula, MT
Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, Univ. of Montana, current night sky viewing research

Elie Hadda

Live and work in Saudi Arabia

I'm in lighting industry from 14 years and I'm involved in lighting design as well.

My aim is to raise awareness about the dark sky and the negative impacts of light pollution

Joanie Hammer

Brigham City, UT

Box Elder County Tourism, No current involvement, motivated by great dark sky potential in my county.

Cathy Handzel

San Diego, CA

DarkSky San Diego County, but support entire County

Policy change for city streetlights and outdoor lighting ordinances and code enforcement

Talks, star parties, light pollution booths at environmental events in the County

I think we CAN make a change through education and policy. Bring back the night sky and rid us of glare :)

Heidi Hansen

Flagstaff, AZ

Economic Vitality Director, Flagstaff, AZ

First International Dark Sky City - tourism sector

Scott Heesacker

Willamette Valley, OR

Owner/operator of a jet boat tour company in the Willamette Valley. I am looking at offering more dark Sky tour opportunities in our area. Thank you

Kate Hopson

Lake City, CO

I am fortunate to live in Lake City, Colorado!

Roles:

Lake City / Hinsdale County, Colorado Marketing Consultant

Lake City / Hinsdale County, Colorado Chamber Director and Event Coordinator

Dark Sky Colorado Board Member

I am involved in tourism marketing in my community and also on the planning committee for a new annual event, Lake City Star Fest. I also sit on the Dark Sky Colorado board to lend a tourism and marketing perspective. I am passionate about the work that I do and am excited about introducing more dark sky marketing for our Lake City and Hinsdale County which boasts incredible dark skies.

Bruce Horrocks

Logan, UT

Cache Valley Astronomical Society

Kelli Housley

NM

Chaco Culture NHP, giving programs/supervising staff/volunteers during programs and star parties; I love the night sky and learning everything I can!

Jenny Jackson

NV

Public Information Officer with Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources;
Our Department houses the Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation.

Josi Kander

Rifle, CO

I work for Clanton and Associates, a lighting design firm. We advocate for dark sky design in all of our lighting designs, from streetscapes to architecture to parks.

Alexandra Keeling

Moab, UT

I'm from Michigan but currently based in Moab, Utah. I am Outreach Coordinator with Friends of Arches & Canyonland Parks (FOACP) and we operate Moab Dark Skies.

Jill Lagan

Boulder City, NV

Boulder City Chamber of Commerce. I am working with the City of Boulder City on retrofitting all the City overhead lights due to a \$1.9 mill EDA grant, I can see the direct impact of astrotourism in our community and to for our local's quality of life.

Mark Laurin

Silverthorne, CO

Affiliated with Dark Sky CO, and Summit County Natural Night Sky Affiliates.

Motivation: Getting youth involved and BIPOC involvement.

Jennifer Leaver

Salt Lake City, UT

Senior Tourism Analyst at the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, I work on a contract with the Utah Office of Tourism. Excited to learn more!

Gregg Martinez

Page, AZ

Horseshoe Bend Night Parties, Tourism motivates me for this work. And protecting the night sky

Nathan Masek

Albuquerque, NM

MRMPO/MRCOG

Senior Transportation Planner II/Traffic Monitoring Prgm Mgr

Abe Medina

CO

Recreation Program Manager, Colorado State Land Board. We manage state trust lands in Colorado, and have a couple of properties as Dark Sky registered sites.

Bradley Mills

NV

Great Basin National Park in Nevada, National Park Service. I'm the lead Astronomy Ranger, heading up the park's night sky conservation efforts and public programs. Sharing the night sky and creating connections to the sky with folks who don't normally get to enjoy it is lifechanging and incredibly fulfilling

David Mitchell

Springfield, MO

Missouri State University. Originally from Texas, but currently live in Missouri. I've been interested in dark skies since I was a child when I was trying to decide between becoming an economist or an astronomer. I'm also very interested in externalities and regional economic growth.

Pat Moffitt

Kane, UT

Good afternoon. I'm just a Kane County, UT resident with no professional affiliation. I support local efforts to establish an observatory facility and am interested in this subject.

Steven Moore

Bend, OR

Park Ranger with 14 years of seasonal work in/around Colorado Plateau, emphasizing interpretation in astronomy and dark sky values. I do that locally as well as a volunteer in Central Oregon at Oregon Observatory and my community.

Ben Muhlestein

Blanding City, UT

Hi, I'm Ben Muhlestein. I am from Monticello Utah, but work in Blanding Utah in Economic Development. I've worked doing Dark Sky programming in the past and am looking to start a Astronomy tourism business as well.

Janet Muir

UT

Have worked with Colorado Dark Sky Cooperative (CPDSC) for about six years. Active with John Barentine in supporting a number of certifications of Intl. Dark Sky Parks.

Dawn Nilson

Portland, OR

DarkSky Delegate; Fibonacci Enterprises (Consulting); Oregon Outback Dark Sky Network; BRDSC; Rose City Astronomers Dark Sky Preservation Director; As a professional natural resources planner and amateur astronomer I've been a dark sky advocate for 14 years.

Jill Nishball

Bend, OR

Oregon State Parks & Recreation Dept; Living here in Bend, Oregon. Huge advocate for Dark Night Skies in our state parks and elsewhere!

Nora Richter

Reno, NV

I work with Friends of Nevada Wilderness. I helped apply for the Massacre Rim Dark Sky Sanctuary in Northwestern Nevada back in 2018, and help keep that status active with the IDA. Protecting dark skies is key to keeping wilderness areas wild!

Amanda Robinson

Kane, UT

Kane County Office of Tourism; Hello, Amanda here on behalf of Janette Peatross, Director for Kane County Office of Tourism. Hoping to learn how to advocate and promote for tourism.

Didier Saumon

Los Alamos, NM

Amateur Astronomer and local Dark sky advocate. The county adopted a comprehensive lighting ordinance last December and we're currently working on its practical implementation.

Libby Schaaf

AZ/UT

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area/Rainbow Bridge National Monument. Rainbow Bridge is the first Dark Sky Sanctuary. These parks host Star Parties which are one of the most popular visitor activities.

Anil Seth

Salt Lake City, UT

University of Utah Professor of Astronomy, I work with the dark sky studies minor program at the University. I am also a member of the Dark Sky Utah board, and the steering committee for these talks/the CPDSC.

Deana Sheriff

Nucla, CO

Affiliated with Western Slope Dark Sky Coalition,

Involved with creating a dark sky reserve. Motivated by keeping our skies dark - hard to get back once it's gone.

Randy Stanley

Fort Collins, CO

Acting Head of Resource Management & Research, Zion National Park and former Night Skies coordinator for NPS Intermountain Region.

Lisa Stoner

Logan, UT

Coordinator, Colorado Plateau Dark Sky Cooperative (CPDSC) based out of the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism at Utah State University. My role is to connect people to the night sky by coordinating meetings like these, encourage people to explore the wonder of the night sky, and increase awareness about the importance of the dark sky resource. Be sure to check out the website for the ["Dark Sky Passport"](#)

lisa.stoner@usu.edu

Sinda Sutton

Oracle, AZ

Oracle State Park, We are a certified international dark sky park the first for our agency. We host star parties and have a section of park we open for reservations to dark sky view.

Motivation: The people.

Todd Tanner

Salt Lake City, UT

Utah Office of Tourism, Destination Development Specialist

Aaron Watson

Paonia, CO

Board Chair, DarkSky Colorado

Melissa Weddel

Missoula, MT

University of Montana @ Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research

Taylor Wilkie

Prineville, OR

Hello, my name is Taylor Wilkie, and I am the Destination Specialist for Explore Prineville. I am working to promote Oregon's first certified Dark Sky Park at the Prineville Reservoir State Park. I'm motivated to promote sustainable tourism that preserves our beautiful natural environment, and dark skies are one of the coolest ways to do just that!

Christie Wilkins

Gunnison, CO

NPS - Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park (BLCA) & Curecanti National Recreation Area (CURE); Education programming

Mickey Wright

Torrey, UT

What are your organizational affiliations? Mayor

What dark sky work are you involved with? Maintaining dark sky certification & promoting astrotourism